

Northumberland

The place for prosperity

The Northumberland
Economic Strategy 2019–2024

Executive Summary





Anvilman Blacksmith Artist, Morpeth

MAP OF NORTHUMBERLAND





Tharsus, design and manufacture of smart machines and robots, Blyth

FOREWORD

OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVE, INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

Northumberland is the place for prosperity, a county with international leaders in industry, investment ready locations, innovative people, welcoming communities and globally significant culture and landscapes.

Our ambition is to deliver inclusive, industrial growth and empower all our residents. We are passionate about supporting a more productive, prosperous economy in our county and the wider region to deliver on the Government’s Industrial Strategy here in Northumberland.

As part of the new North of Tyne Combined Authority we can better connect and combine our strengths with Newcastle and North Tyneside, harnessing the potential of our highly skilled workforce and the industrial and innovation assets in the area.

There is a commitment to harness more power from the Government to develop opportunities that everyone can share a stake in. Working together, our focus is to deliver for residents and businesses collaborating with our partners in the North East of England.

With our neighbours in Cumbria and Scotland we are developing the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, and we will demonstrate that rural communities can deliver the Government’s Industrial Strategy ambitions as a rural scale up exemplar for England.

This Economic Strategy for Northumberland 2019-2024 confirms our vision and ambition to deliver a real and lasting impact in all our communities.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Peter Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Signed
Cllr Peter Jackson
Leader Northumberland County Council





NORTHUMBERLAND'S INDUSTRIAL OPPORTUNITIES



Deep Ocean, the Maersk Connector Vessel docked at Energy Central / Port of Blyth

Northumberland is home to leading global industries and is well placed to deliver against the grand challenges of the national Industrial Strategy. The county has businesses operating in globally competitive supply chains, and unique assets for large scale investment.

We are working with our partners in North of Tyne, the Borderlands and with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) as it develops the new North East Local Industrial Strategy for the area.

Northumberland is linking into the wider economy of the new North of Tyne combined authority, including the collective strength of our employment base and innovation and skills infrastructure centred on our world class universities. Together North of Tyne represents a functional and interdependent economy with a population of 819,000¹ with 24,000 businesses² and the total value of goods and services produced in the area of £17 billion³.

Northumberland⁴ is home to over 100,000 employees⁵ and over 11,000 active businesses⁶ the majority being micro or small. The economy comprises 19% of employment in the public sector and 81% in the private sector⁷.

The largest sector⁸ is Health, employing 18,000 people (16% of our employment), followed closely by Tourism, employing just over 17,000 (15%). Our Manufacturing sector is strong, sustaining 12,000 employees, equating to 11% of employment and this is mirrored by our retail sector⁹. This influences the business base of Northumberland and impacts upon the skilled workforce of the county, in turn affecting our GVA performance.

These sectors occupy a significant proportion of the business base of Northumberland and are employing the major share of the skilled workforce in the county as well as being a significant contributor to GDP.



Northumberland’s tourism and creative sector is internationally recognised, our culture and tourism businesses support over 15,000 jobs and underpin a sector that welcomed 10.3m visitors during 2017, a 6% increase on 2016. Spend by visitors to the county has also increased up 6% on 2016 at £925.84m. The challenge is to continue to drive private sector investment to increase the quality of employment, whilst ensuring the ecosystem that supports the industry, in terms of the attractors across Northumberland, is maintained and improved.

This strategy focuses on creating quality local jobs which will be derived from key sectors where there are likely to be gains in productivity, access to international markets and a highly skilled workforce. We will integrate this with work to boost the business base, inclusive workforce development and the delivery of interventions to improve the places in which we live and work.

This sits alongside the opportunities to unlock the value of our rural business base through innovation in agri-tech and scaling up growth in our SME community. The importance of the retail sector is an embedded part of the tourism and culture agenda connected to our focus on improving town centres including a focus on the future success of our High Streets.



1. ONS Population Estimates 2017 | 2. ONS IDBR 2018 | 3.GVA 2016 | 4. The Economic Strategy is founded on an understanding of our county and the economic opportunities we also share with North of Tyne and Borderlands partners. This is explored further in the supplementary paper Northumberland's Economy. | 5. ONS APS 2018 | 6. ONS IDBR 2018 | 7. BRES 2017 based on grouping sectors by Standard Industrial Classification | 8. BRES 2017

Merck Sharp and Dhome - one of the top five UK biopharmaceutical companies, Cramlington
Essity - global hygiene and health company, Prudhoe





Energy Central - the premier offshore base at the Port of Blyth

VISION

This Economic Strategy sets out our commitments to develop the economy in the context of the Council’s Corporate Plan and the emerging Local Plan for Northumberland.

In delivering our strategy we have a focus on creating quality local jobs which will be derived from key sectors where there are likely to be gains in productivity, access to international markets and a highly skilled workforce. We will concentrate on integrating this with work to boost the business base, ensuring our workforce is inclusive and the delivery of interventions to improve the places in which we live and work.

Our vision is therefore **to be a prosperous, inclusive and connected community.**

Fig 3: Economic Strategy Vision and Objectives



OBJECTIVES

Our objectives to deliver this vision are:

- To grow the business base, with a clear focus on six major sector opportunities where we can contribute to the national Industrial Strategy and ensure we deliver services to enable business to have the best possible enterprise, innovation, development, finance and advisory assistance to operate here in Northumberland.
- To develop inclusive employment, our highly skilled workforce is a major strength, but we must ensure that the employment available is inclusive and accessible to all parts of our community.
- To ensure our towns and communities are productive places economically. It is vital that we are sensitive to each place’s characteristics and the unique opportunities within them, our task is to develop effective support from the Council working with our partners to deliver improvements.

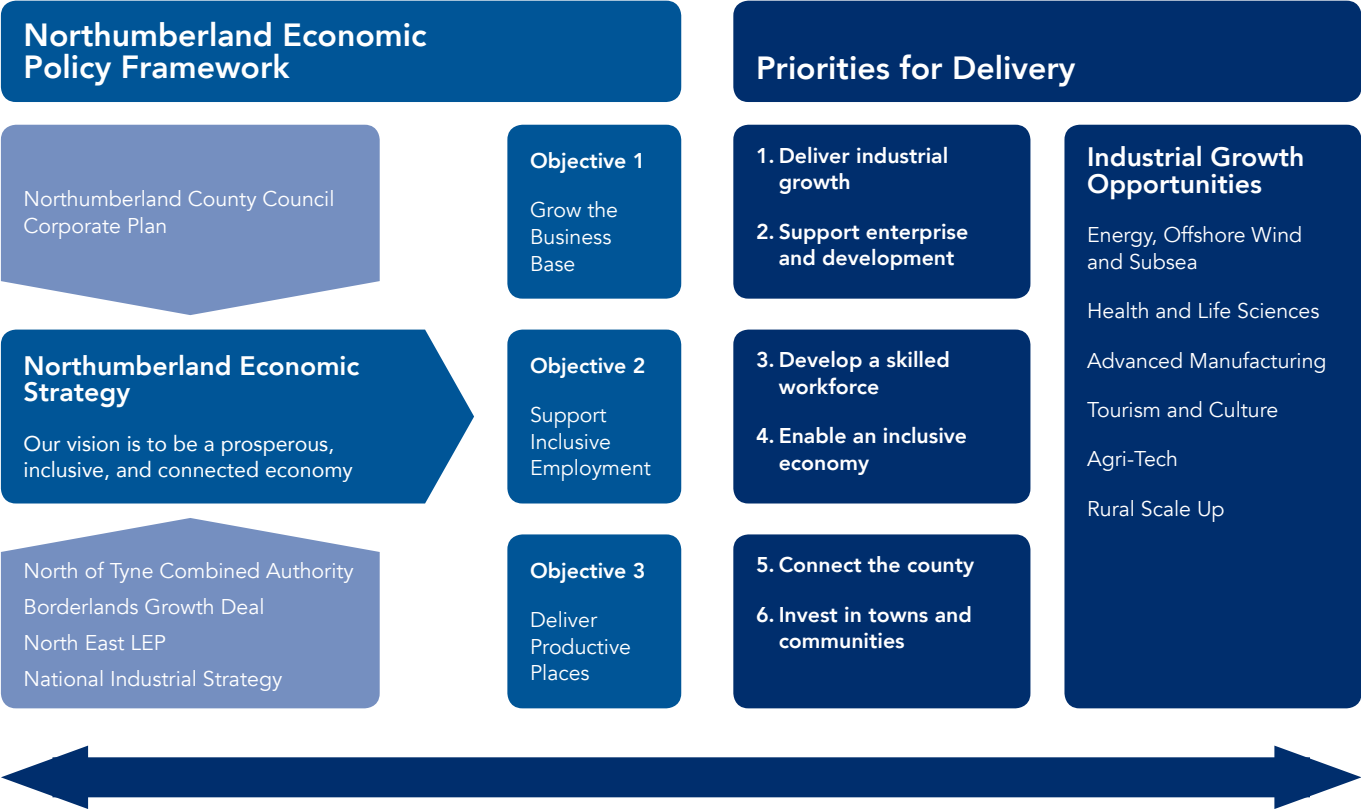


Ancient Britain Guided Tours, Hadrians Wall UNESCO World Heritage Site

DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

The strategy includes six priorities for delivery to grow the business base, support inclusive employment and deliver productive places.

Fig 4: Economic Strategy Policy Framework



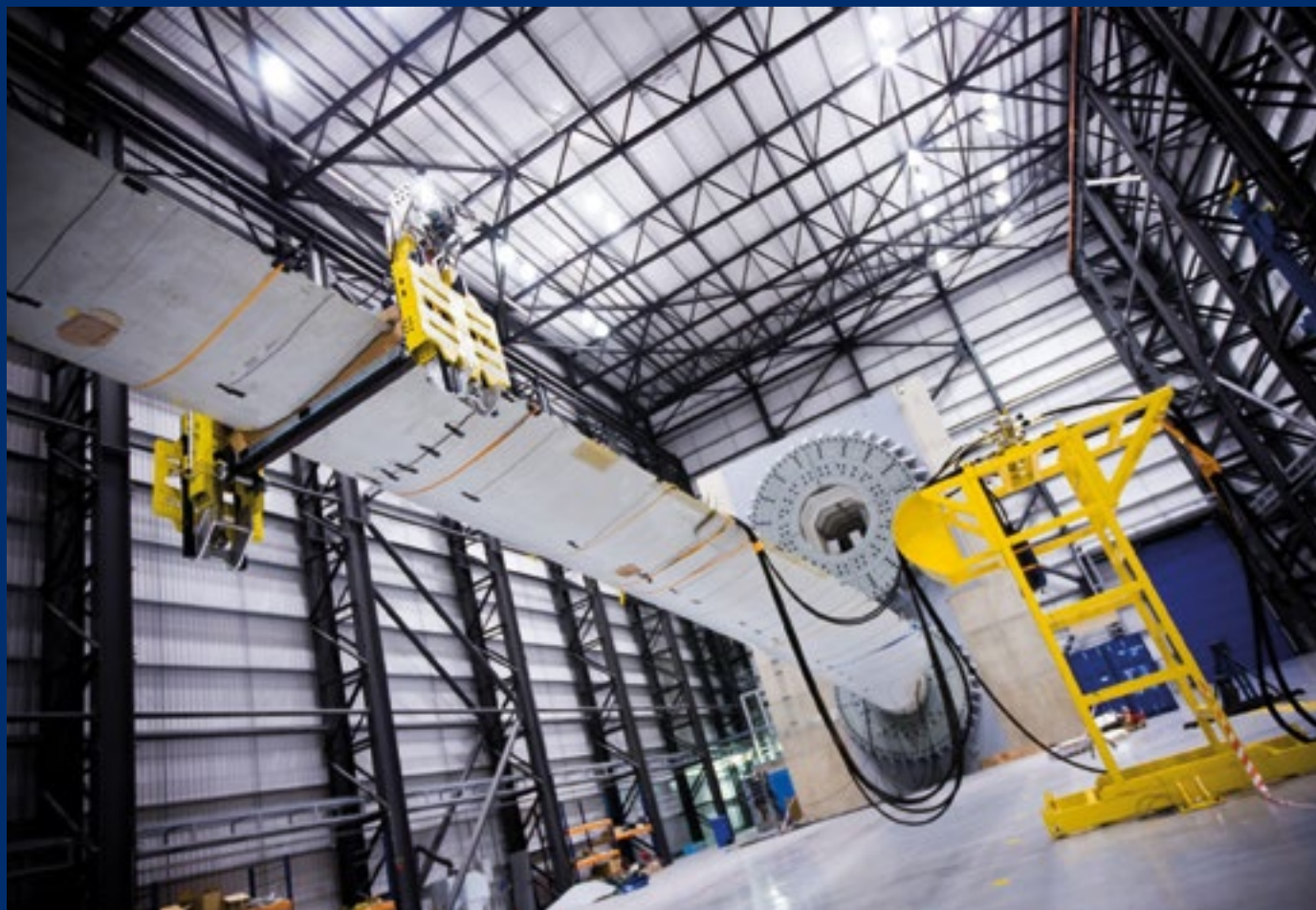
PRIORITY 1

DELIVER INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

To develop industrial growth sectors with a clear focus on six major sector opportunities.

Key Deliverables

- Secure major development in the energy and offshore, health and life sciences and advanced manufacturing sectors
- Ensure Northumberland is an internationally significant tourism and culture destination
- Deliver rural business scale up and develop the agritech sector providing an uplift in micro / SME business growth as the rural exemplar for England



Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult (OREC) - the UK's leading technology, innovation and research centre for offshore renewable energy, Blyth

PRIORITY 2

SUPPORT ENTERPRISE AND INVESTMENT

To enable business to have the best possible enterprise, innovation, development, finance and advisory support services to operate here in Northumberland

Key Deliverables

- Support effective routes to finance to support development
- Provide business and commercial advice for enterprise, innovation, digitalisation and development
- Ensure that quality business infrastructure for growth is available



Moorland Spirit Co, Morpeth

PRIORITY 3

DEVELOP A SKILLED WORKFORCE

To develop our highly skilled workforce which is a strength, ensuring that the employment available is inclusive and accessible to all parts of our community.

Key Deliverables

- Raise aspirations and attainment levels to ensure young people can take advantage of economic opportunities
- Inspire the future workforce with a focus on industry connectors relating to our key sectors in relation to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Manufacturing)
- Develop skills pathways, systems and networks to meet demand with a focus on effective apprenticeships and other measures linking supply to demand



Avid Technology - design and manufacture of electrified powertrain technology, Cramlington

PRIORITY 4

ENABLE INCLUSION IN THE ECONOMY

To enable participation in inclusive employment through the opportunities that growth provides.

Key Deliverables

- Support residents furthest from the labour market with into work assistance
- Address barriers to inclusive employment
- Encourage growth of better jobs with good work principles



Great Northumberland community event (image: Jason Thompson / Sound Ideas Media)

PRIORITY 5

CONNECT THE COUNTY

To provide the best possible digital, data and transport connectivity to support Northumberland’s economy. Northumberland includes commuter, coastal and rural places. The infrastructure Northumberland provides, its roads, railways, bus services and digital provision needs to support our ambition to grow and ensure Northumberland is easy to get around and simple to connect with internally and into external markets.

Key Deliverables

- Deliver digital services to be a 5G enabled county including high quality full fibre Broadband, data infrastructure, skills and business support
- Invest in high quality passenger transport including the reopening of the Northumberland to Newcastle rail line to passengers.
- Secure infrastructure improvements to the A1, A69, low carbon networks, interconnectivity within our towns and communities, flood and coastal resilience and high quality Port access.



Royal Border Bridge, Berwick (Image: Gavin Parr)

PRIORITY 6

INVEST IN TOWNS AND COMMUNITIES

To drive investment into our network of towns and communities ensuring they are productive and attractive places. We will be sensitive to their characteristics and the unique opportunities within them. The Council has intervened and invested in developing our towns and communities and our task is to continue to deliver focused input, investment and effective support working with our partners.

Key Deliverables

- Support place based investment in our towns and communities
- Develop targeted measures to boost town centre performance
- Deliver attractive housing providing choice and affordability



Tour of Britain Event, Alnwick



Bamburgh Castle (Image: Cleeve Langdon)



Great Northumberland Event Finale, Berwick (image: Jason Thompson / Sound Ideas Media)

The Northumberland Economic Strategy is about delivering real change in our communities. Delivery will require communities, businesses, the public and voluntary sectors to come together to realise our potential. This involves working at different economic geographies that make sense to communities and reflect where and how people live their lives and the types of businesses and their support requirements.

A range of support services are available and have a focus on the priorities outlined in this strategy. We will use new powers and funding as effectively as possible that come with devolution working with our partners in North of Tyne, the Borderlands and the wider North East region to deliver economic opportunities in Northumberland.

The full Economic Strategy and supporting documents are available at:

northumberland.gov.uk/economicstrategy



Deep Ocean Offshore Services Base, Blyth

Northumberland

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 **Northumberland**
County Council

Proud to support
discover our Land 

northumberland.gov.uk/economicstrategy
discoverourland.co.uk

Front cover l–r:

Deep Ocean Offshore Services Base, Blyth

Tharsus, design and manufacture of smart machines and robots, Blyth

Blagdon Farm, Blagdon nr Morpeth

Kielder Observatory, Kielder Water and Forest Park